

June 28, 1974

**Chinese Communist Party Central Committee Notice
[Zhongfa] (1979) No. 19: Notice on the Talks
between Chairman Mao and Edward Heath**

Citation:

"Chinese Communist Party Central Committee Notice [Zhongfa] (1979) No. 19: Notice on the Talks between Chairman Mao and Edward Heath", June 28, 1974, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Fujian Provincial Archives, 244-1-106, 16-19. Translated by David Cowhig. <https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/290997>

Summary:

A summary of a conversation between Mao Zedong and Edward Heath. Topics covered include the Watergate scandal, European security, bilateral relations between the PRC and the UK, and the foreign policy of the Soviet Union.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Fujian Provincial Revolutionary Committee

June 28, 1974

Serial No. 0001314

Chinese Communist Party Central Committee Document

Central Committee [*Zhongfa*] (1974) No. 19

Chairman Mao has read and approved.

Chinese Communist Party Central Committee Notice

To: The party committees of all provinces, municipalities, and autonomous regions; to military party committees of the major military regions, the provincial military regions and field armies; to the leading groups of the party committees and departments of the central committee and the state organs or core party groups; to the general departments of the military commission, and the party committees of each of the military service branches:

This notice hereby conveys to you the Ministry of Foreign Affairs "Notice on the Talks Between Chairman Mao and Edward Heath." Please convey it to the standing committees of the provinces, municipalities, and autonomous regions and to the standing committees of the party committees of the army level and above and to comrades responsible for foreign affairs work.

"Notice on the Talks between Chairman Mao and Edward Heath"

Here is a summary of the recent talks between Chairman Mao and the UK Conservative Party leader Edward Heath. Please conscientiously make arrangements for study and learning from this document.

I. Chairman Mao asked Heath if Nixon could survive Watergate. Heath thought Nixon could survive it. Chairman Mao said, we don't understand why the Watergate scandal is so serious. Why bother? There is just no point to it. Following up on that question, Heath asked if Watergate would make it more difficult for China to establish relations with the U.S. and to carry out its policy toward the U.S. and toward Nixon. Chairman Mao replied, no, not really. Heath asked how relations between China and the United States would develop and how they seemed to have stagnated since Nixon's visit. Chairman Mao said, that doesn't matter, it's still better than it was before. Could you do Nixon a favor and tell him to get over the obstacle of Watergate?

When talking about the Geneva Conference in 1954, Chairman Mao said that the Americans had over-extended themselves. Just look at Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Iran, Turkey, the Middle East, the Mediterranean, and Europe. The Americans have been cursing us now for how many years, it's been over twenty years. Heath said jokingly, China should beware of American imperialism! Chairman Mao said, but now we feel relatively comfortable about the Americans.

II. Chairman Mao asked Heath, when will that European Security Conference of yours be successfully concluded? When Heath replied that it would be easier to answer when that conference would be unsuccessfully concluded. Chairman Mao said, Yes, we are in agreement that the European Security Council will reach a conclusion, but real reconciliation between them (the U.S. and the Soviet Union) will not be possible.

When Heath talked about the Soviet Union's great determination and strong organization to build up its strength, Chairman Mao asked rhetorically, does the Soviet Union face no difficulties? He continued: from my perspective, I'd say that they can't even take care of themselves. They can't deal with Europe, the Middle East, South Asia, China, and the Pacific. I think they will lose. When Heath again emphasized Soviet strength and asked if China thought the Soviet Union was not a threat to China, Chairman Mao said, we are ready if they come. But if they do come, they'll collapse! They only have so many soldiers and yet you Europeans are so afraid of them! There is a part of public opinion in the West that every day wants to divert this bogeyman, Russia, to China. Your own old-timers, including Chamberlain, including [Édouard] Daladier, were pushing Germany eastwards.

Heath asked whether the disagreement between China and the Soviet Union was mainly ideological, or whether it was due to Soviet power politics. Chairman Mao said

the border problem was caused by ideology. The Sino-Soviet quarrel should be considered to have started in 1954, because Khrushchev approached Adenauer in 1955 and told him that China must not be allowed to get out of control. Adenauer always thought that the Soviet Union would try to take over Europe, Heath said. Chairman Mao said they'd want to take over Europe, Asia, Africa, but their strength doesn't match up to their ambitions. They lost Egypt. Their influence here is even less. They did have some influence. Lin Biao was their man.

Heath said that although the Soviet Union had made a treaty with Mrs. Gandhi, they did not have much influence in India either. Mao said, I see it the same way. Your foreign minister, Alec Douglas-Home, urged us to improve relations with India, by which he meant to poach India from the Soviet side.

When Heath said that a strong Europe was important and could make Russia fret, Chairman Mao said, we in China would be happy to see a strong Europe. We don't want to get into any quarrels with Europe or Asia, including Japan. If you want to pick a quarrel, well OK, but don't make it a big quarrel. Chairman Mao asked if China was now more comfortable with Japan. Mao nodded and said yes. Heath asked if China believed in the peaceful intentions of the Japanese. Mao said for the foreseeable future. It is hard to talk about the future. But we do not fear Europe.

III. Chairman Mao said, Britain was able to normalize diplomatic relations with China because of Heath, so I call you Mr. Prime Minister. When talking about not arranging for Heath to review the guard of honor at the airport because he was not the current prime minister, Chairman Mao said, I think that should have been arranged. I am not afraid of offending Harold Wilson. (To Heath) I am voting for you!

When Heath spoke of the possibility that the United Kingdom could provide China with the help it needed in the field of technology, Mao said, We are happy that you are helping us. Heath said he was always happy to help, and Mao said, that's good, that's very good.

Mao said to Heath, there still remains that question of Hong Kong. We are not discussing that now either. The island of Hong Kong was ceded and Kowloon was leased, and there are still 24 years left on the lease. Let's discuss what to do about that when the time comes. It's their (pointing to the young comrades attending the meeting) business now.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

May 21, 1974

Communist Party Central Committee Office

Issued June 10, 1974

Copies printed: 2,101